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PEKING TO RELEASE CAPTURED SAIGON TROOPS, U.S. CITIZEN 31 JAN
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(TEXT) PEKING, JANUARY 29, 1974 (HSINHUA) -- THE HSINHUA NEWS AGENCY IS AUTHORIZED TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING ANNOUNCEMENT: IN THE FIGHT OF SELF-DEFENCE AT CHINA'S HSISHA ISLANDS ON JANUARY 19 AND 20, 1974, CHINESE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY UNITS, MILITIAMEN AND FISHERMEN CAPTURED MAJOR PHAM VAN HONG AND 47 OTHER OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE SAIGON TROOPS OF SOUTH VIETNAM AND AN AMERICAN, WHO INTRUDED INTO CHINA.

IN ITS STATEMENT OF JANUARY 20, THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA ANNOUNCED THAT "THE PERSONNEL OF THE OTHER SIDE WHOM WE HAVE CAPTURED IN THE FIGHT OF SELF-DEFENCE WILL BE REPATRIATED AT AN APPROPRIATE TIME." THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT HAS NOW DECIDED TO REPATRIATE THE ABOVE-MENTIONED CAPTURED PERSONNEL IN BATCHES. THE FIRST BATCH, CONSISTING OF FIVE SICK AND WOUNDED CAPTURED PERSONNEL OF THE SAIGON TROOPS AND THE CAPTURED AMERICAN, WHO IS ILL, WILL BE REPATRIATED ON JANUARY 31 AT SHUMCHUN, KWANGTUNG PROVINCE, CHINA.

THE CHINESE RED CROSS SOCIETY WILL NOTIFY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS AND THE AMERICAN NATIONAL RED CROSS TO SEND THEIR REPRESENTATIVES OVER TO RECEIVE THEM.

29 JAN 0220Z SJW/BG

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